



For Immediate Release
October 12, 2017

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New Parent Leave Act, SB 63 (Jackson), Signed by Governor Brown

Sacramento – On October 12, 2017, Governor Jerry Brown signed Senate Bill 63 by Senator Hannah Beth Jackson, which extends job protections to 2.6 million more Californians when they become parents. Under pre-existing law, only parents working for very large employers have a right to take up to 12 weeks of parental leave. Now, parents working for medium-size employers will have basic job protections and be able to invest that time in nurturing their newborn child.

“Once again, California is leading the nation to strengthen policies in the key first months of each child's life. With his signature of SB 63 (Jackson), Governor Jerry Brown is acting on the science that proves parental leave for these first key months of a child's life is not a luxury to debate—it's a developmental necessity for each child,” said George Halvorson, former CEO of Kaiser Permanente and Chair of First 5 California. “Extending parental leave to 2.6 million Californians is an investment of parents' time in each child's success and our shared economic futures.”

The latest medical research reveals the very first days and months of a baby's life are crucial to each child's future. A baby's brain development starts even before birth and accelerates during the first three months of life, as well as throughout the first five years. What parents and caregivers do for and with their babies in those first months give children both a strong learning start and emotionally secure underpinnings for life.

“This science is why First 5 California launched its Talk. Read. Sing.[®] campaign, which is currently on the airwaves,” said Camille Maben, Executive Director of First 5 California. “We want every parent to understand that their loving attention and interactions are the key to their child's future success. Every parent needs this information to take action during the first months of their child's life, and every parent needs the ability to take the TIME for action.”

A 2011 field poll found almost 2 out of 5 employees who were eligible to use California's Paid Family Leave program did not apply for the state benefit because they feared losing their job or other negative consequences at work. This is a Paid Family Leave program that employees fund with deductions from their very own paychecks, and these parents didn't get to access the benefit because they had no job protections.

Because no parent should have to choose between the well-being of their new child and their family's financial security and health care coverage, First 5 California has partnered with Senator Jackson, Legal Aid at Work, the California Employment Lawyers

Association, and the California Work and Family Coalition to sponsor and champion the passage of SB 63.

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First 5 California was established in 1998 when voters passed Proposition 10, which taxes tobacco products to fund services for children ages 0 to 5 and their families. First 5 California programs and resources are designed to educate and support teachers, parents, and caregivers in the critical role they play during a child's first five years – to help California kids receive the best possible start in life and thrive. For more information, please visit www.cafc.ca.gov.